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IRS Held Worst Offender

House Unit to Seek Paperwork Cut

By Larry Weekley
Washington Post Staff Writer

A House committee is expected to issue a report this week, calling for major reforms in Federal paperwork imposed on business.

Never before has the Government tried to assess the cost to businessmen of making reports, filling out forms and answering surveys for the Government.

Prentice-Hall Inc., the business advisory service, said Rep. Arnold Olsen (D-Mont.) has given the following preview of the report. Olsen was chairman of the House Subcommittee on Census and Government Statistics in the 88th Congress.

The quarterly employee earnings report for Social Security will be replaced by a yearly report. This quarterly report was found to be the single most burdensome report for small businessmen.

Businessmen will be able to tell which Government forms must be filled out and which are voluntary. Many agencies in the past have used a gimmick of stating at the head of a questionnaire the words, "Required by Law," when this was a very broad reading of the law.

All forms sent out or sponsored by the Government will have to be cleared with a central paperwork clearinghouse at the Bureau of the Budget in the Executive Office of the President. Although agencies are required to do this now,

many have not complied. This also would cover information-gathering by State or local governments with Federal funds or by universities and contractors making studies for the Government.

The IRS will be asked to set up a study group to assess the time and cost to business of filling out IRS forms. Congress may be asked to take action to require the IRS to simplify its reports from business.

A special industry committee in the Commerce Department studying the paperwork problem in foreign trade will be strengthened. Paperwork for foreign trade was found by the committee to be particularly onerous.

Reporting activities of Federal regulatory agencies will

come under closer scrutiny. The committee would like to see "fishing expeditions" of some of the agencies curtailed.

Congress may keep closer check on the paperwork problem in the future by making specific appropriations for any surveys of business.

The Government will study new ways to reduce the reporting burden of small business.

Prentice-Hall quoted Rep. Olsen as saying that last year the Government printed 2½ billion public-use forms — 12 for every person in the Nation. A billion of those were for the Treasury Department alone, and the committee found the Internal Revenue Service to be the worst offender.

Federal Furniture Frozen

Johnson Closes Case on Filing Cabinets

By Laurence Stern
Washington Post Staff Writer

The Great Society may create affluence in the land but poverty in Government offices.

This is the unmistakable import of President Johnson's latest call for a "moratorium" on filing cabinets in the Federal bureaus across the Nation.

Mr. Johnson's war on the file case was declared quietly on Wednesday during the announcement of plans for his newest messages on arms control, national defense and foreign aid.

This latest engagement

supplements the President's various campaigns against proliferation of Government questionnaires and reports and the lighting of light bulbs.

It was launched with the advice and consent of Acting General Services Administrator Lawson B. Knott Jr., the supreme commander of offices and supplies for the Government's white-collar brigades.

Here are the dimensions of the crisis that might be called the Filing Case Explosion: Government now owns about two million of them—roughly 1.5 file cab-

inets for each Federal employe. Uncle Sam has been buying them at the rate of 100,000 a year at an average unit cost of \$50.

Against this background the President wrote Knott:

"I agree with your recommendation that we declare a moratorium on the purchase of new file cases for use in the fifty states and the District of Columbia.

"For the duration of this moratorium, agencies will meet their current need for file cases by accelerated disposal of old records either by destruction or by transfer to Federal Records Centers."

One loophole not covered by the President's moratorium are U.S. offices abroad. There problems of cost and logistics make it more practical to replace than repair.

The foray behind the carbon paper curtain would also apply the economy blitz to many traditional symbols of bureaucratic caste: the rug on the floor that spells s-t-a-t-u-s, the splendiferous executive desk and the souped-up electric typewriter.

"Federal agencies are spending approximately \$60

million annually for new office furniture, file cabinets and typewriters," the President pointedly observed.

In his best Scotch uncle maner Mr. Johnson is now admonishing the bureaus to repair instead of replace official equipment and destroy rather than store old records.

By following this prescription the President thinks the Federal Government can save at least \$5 million annually. This presumably could be invested in the War on Poverty, the War on Ugliness, the War on Ignorance and the War on Sickness.

The Problem of Two Million Federal Filing Cabinets

By ROBERT WALTERS
Star Staff Writer

They give bureaucrats a feeling of accomplishment, overwhelm visitors from the outlands and offer refuge to hapless secretaries trying to straighten their stockings.

They line the marble corridors at the Justice Department, are built into the walls of the new Rayburn House Office Building, and once were stashed in abandoned bathrooms in the poverty program's first home.

Once as solidly entrenched as the Rock of Gibraltar, the ubiquitous filing cabinet appears to have met the same fate as the burning White House light bulb. President Johnson has decreed it to be passe.

Could Save \$5 Million

In the name of economy, Johnson last month told Lawson G. Knott Jr., acting administrator of the General Services Administration, that the government could save at least \$5 million yearly by declaring a moratorium on the purchase of all filing cabinets.

"The GSA is authorized to fill requirements for file cases which cannot be met by records disposal under an austere standard of issue from inventories of excess file cases and current warehouse stocks," Johnson said.

"While this saving may appear modest in relation to the over-all costs of government, it represents the kind of managerial prudence which can save us much larger sums if applied to all aspects of government operations," the President added.

Some in Archives

If the sheer size of the problem is a reliable indicator, the President may meet with success in Viet Nam long before he wins the battle of the filing cabinet.

According to John E. Byrne, GSA information director, there are approximately 25 million cubic feet of records stored in federal filing cabinets.

About 16 million cubic feet are in the hands of federal agencies which claim they are necessary current records, while the remaining 9 million are being stored by the GSA.



Filing cabinets line a corridor in the Department of Justice Building.—Star Staff Photo.

Of that 9 million, 1 million are classified as "enduring, permanent records with historical interest" and are stored in the National Archives.

Alexandria Warehouse Used

The remaining 8 million cannot be thrown out because some day somebody might need them, but they are inactive files, stored in 15 Federal Records Centers around the country.

"The rule of thumb is that if a file drawer is opened less than once a month or if the records are

more than four years old, they can be transferred to a Records Center," Byrne explained. "But that's only a general rule and each agency must tailor standards to its own needs."

In the Washington area, an abandoned warehouse near the Alexandria waterfront serves as a records depository, with files stacked from floor to ceiling. A backup facility is located in the Franconia area of Fairfax County and a new center is to be opened in Suitland, Prince Georges County, Md.

The Records Centers were opened in the early 1950's as an economy move, Byrne explained. To store one cubic foot of files there, the government pays an average of 28 cents yearly.

Bought 100,000 a Year

A cubic foot of records in a downtown office building, with high rent and maintenance expenses, costs the government \$3.77 annually, he added.

There are approximately two million federal filing cabinets,

most of them with two or five drawers. Until Jan. 13, when the President called a halt to the process, the government was buying an estimated 100,000 a year.

Because of the size of its operation, the Department of Defense probably uses more filing cabinets than any other federal agency. In response to an earlier call for excess filing cases, the Army alone found 5,500 spares.

The Records Centers are but one effort being made to cut down on the number of filing cabinets used in downtown buildings. Last year,

the government turned out 6,468 rolls of microfilmed records, which take up far less space than the originals.

Microfilm Also Involved

But scientists have yet to solve the problem of deterioration which has plagued early microfilm attempts, and last year the GSA ordered that originals of all microfilmed records must be retained until a solution to the problem is found.

The result: Agencies now need

space to store not only the originals but also the microfilm.

Agencies such as the Internal Revenue Service and the Social Security Administration, which must maintain records for virtually all of the country's 190 million citizens, have turned increasingly to punch cards, magnetic tape and other electronic means of records storage.

But another facet of the problem, according to Byrne, is that filing cabinets are frequently misused, serving as a repository for everything from carbon paper to employee lunches.

Rep. Arnold Olsen, D-Mont., a foe of excess federal paper work, has taken another approach to the problem, claiming that the President's order "is to lock the barn door after the horse has been stolen."

'Old Forms Never Die'

According to Olsen, the problem is not the cabinets themselves, but what goes into them. Federal agencies now require one billion reports each year, or five for every person in the U.S., he said last month.

In fiscal 1964-65, the Government Printing Office turned out more than 2.25 billion public use forms for federal agencies, added Olsen, whose House Census and Statistics Subcommittee has been investigating excess government paper work.

"Old forms never die, nor do they fade away. They outlast their author, their recipient and, in most cases, their purposes," Olsen said, citing figures to show that last February more than 13,000 federal employees were at work "in the vineyard of government records, reports, statistics and other paper work."

Olsen said that stored somewhere in federal filing cabinets were at least 40 billion pieces of paper, all of them being shuffled, reproduced or ignored at a cost of more than \$6 billion yearly.

To prove his point, the GSA issued a five-page detailed memorandum on how the White House filing cabinet decision was to be implemented by each agency. It presumably was filed in scores of cabinets all over Washington.

there could be improvements in the U.N. Charter.

To adopt the De Gaulle suggestion, however, would lead to more rather than less trouble. He urges a conference composed of representatives of France, Britain, the United States, Russia and Red China. Why Red China? Peking still is technically at war in Korea with what remains of the U.N. army there — a war of aggression which began almost 15 years ago. The Red Chinese continue to threaten the use of force to achieve their aims in Asia. Whether

with the United Nations could be remedied without any conference if the major nations, France and Russia particularly, had a genuine interest in reform. But there is precious little evidence of this, especially in the matter of Russia's veto-veto-veto performance in the Security Council.

General de Gaulle is quite aware of this fact and his five-power proposal, consequently, is highly suspect. He is cooking up a fish fry for his own purposes, and the United States would be well advised to decline the invitation.

Winston Churchill became the living link uniting his mother's land with his in the grand alliance which at last made tyranny not only tremble, but ignominiously tumble! To be sure the horror of Pearl Harbor cemented the union which alone could say "They

greatest pleasure that the statue should, stand on both American and British soil and I feel that it will rest happily and securely on both feet." And, before many more months have passed it will rest securely, even as he stood, on both feet when all

cried, "Here am I, send me!" And when the very ground trembled beneath men's feet as if all that seemed so firm was to be shattered, there was a man sent from God whose name was Churchill, who, in a storm-swept world stood securely on both feet.

'Those U.N. Dues'

SIR: Regarding your editorial, "Those U.N. Dues," there has been a concerted effort by certain elements throughout the world to lead people to believe that this is a "deadlock between the United States and the delinquent countries," when in reality it is a dispute between the United Nations Charter and the delinquent nations.

If the course of appeasement you suggest were followed it could only result in contempt for the U.N.'s failure to live up to its own charter. This same course of appeasement and abrogation of their own charter in a time of crisis in 1935 led to the ultimate failure of the League of Nations.

All of these delinquent countries agreed to abide by this charter when they accepted membership. Are we to believe that each time a country finds it contrary to their own interest to abide by the charter that the charter must be changed?

Any kind of a "package deal" that would undermine the U.N. charter can only lead to disastrous results for the U.N.

Ruth M. Burns.

Alexandria.

'The Lonely War'

SIR: As I read Richard Critchfield's article, "The Lonely War," in The Sunday Star, it became obvious that something is quite wrong with the way America is treating its own men in South Viet Nam.

American building materials are being made available to the Vietnamese to construct a marketplace, yet are denied to troops who want barracks instead of shacks to live in.

An AID man is quoted as saying, "A military man is a military man and likes to look after his own. . . . Our main job is to show the villagers their government is doing something for them."

How about showing the American GI that his government is doing something for him? Let's start looking out for our own.

Bond E. Rhue.

Hyattsville.

Strip-Mining in Maryland

SIR: This is in regard to the proposal to strip-mine in Maryland's Savage River State Forest. I had been under the impression that this proposal had been turned down—or at least tabled. However, I've just received a letter from the Maryland Board of Public Works which indicates that this appalling idea is still under consideration. As indicated in the letter, a hearing is scheduled before the Commission on Forests and Parks on February 9.

Keep the public informed on this potential atrocity. It seems unbelievable that Gov. Tawes would tolerate strip-mining on state lands, which have been set aside for public purposes; and it is completely unbelievable that the operators will, as the Board of Public Works intimates, do an adequate job of returning the land to its natural beauty.

N. E. Bentson.

Rockville.

Drop in Production

Some years ago, the late Pat Frank fashioned a best-selling novel, "Mr. Adam," from a situation which began with a newspaperman discovering an inexplicable drop in big-city birth rates. The burden of that fantasy was that almost all the males in the country had become sterile.

Nothing of the sort, we venture to guess, is involved in the fall-off in Chicago, where births among a stable population have dropped about 17 percent since 1959, from 98,144 births that year to an estimated 82,000 in 1964. And just to be sure, we checked our own city health officer.

Well, the fact is that the figures for 1964 in Washington are not in yet. According to Dr. Murray Grant, however, the District had 19,967 births in 1959, and 19,845 in 1963. Just about even. And just about what everyone expected.

The Chicago experience was not expected at all. It has touched off a lively debate. Donald J. Bogue, of the University of Chicago's Community and Family Study Center, says "the increased use of family planning is unmistakably the reason." And the head of Chicago's birth-control organization concurs, pointing out, in fact, that her group gave birth-control devices last year to 16,000 people—just about the number of the decline in births. Chicago's health commissioner, however, says there is "no complete answer to the riddle," but "a multiplicity of factors that needs more study."

Dr. Grant says that quite a substantial "statistical study" has been

built into the District's fledgling birth-control program, in order, after five years or so, to be able to answer precisely the sort of questions now creating all the fuss in Chicago. We're glad to hear it.

And while you are about it, Dr. Grant, let's push along those birth figures for 1964. Just in case.

Dropout Repeaters

The fact that 188 of the 509 dropouts lured back to District high schools last fall have again left school is of course disappointing. But not surprising. Indeed, the nearly 65 percent of the returnees who are still in the classroom constitute an excellent record, which fully justifies the extraordinary efforts which were made in their behalf by paid and voluntary workers last summer.

Nor, in fact, is this necessarily the end of the road for the 188. With funds available through the aid to federally-impacted areas program, Superintendent Hansen intends to establish a special evening-hours "dropout school" to give them yet another chance. The curriculum will be oriented to job-training more closely than in the normal classroom.

Not all of them, of course, will make it—even in a class tailored specifically to their abilities and needs. And there is a limit to what can be done. But at least this last effort to salvage as many as possible must be made. The cost to society in terms of unproductive citizens is simply too great to give up.

FROM THE STAR FILES

North-South Peace Talks Fruitless

100 Years Ago

A peace conference between the North and South, with President Lincoln and Alexander Stephens, Vice President of the Confederacy, being the principals, was held at Hampton Roads on February 3, 1865. The delegations met aboard the Union transport River Queen, but the talks settled nothing. Lincoln's terms stressed three things: Reunion of the states, no backing down on emancipation and no cessation of hostilities short of an end of the war and the disbanding of forces hostile to the Federal Government. The Star of February 2, 1865, reported in an "Extra," "Today at 11 o'clock President Lincoln left Washington by special train for Annapolis for the purpose, it is understood, to join Secretary Seward at Fortress Monroe or City Point to hold an interview with the rebel 'deputation'." Messrs. A. H. Stephens, R. M. T. Hunter and John A. Campbell. . . . The following day, "Fortress Monroe, Feb. 3, Alexander H. Stephens and several others of the peace commissioners arrived here this afternoon from City Point on Gen. Grant's special dispatch steamer, Mary Martin. Secretary Seward was there in the steamer River Queen awaiting their arrival. Immediately upon which both vessels proceeded to an anchorage. . . . side by side. . . . The Star said Richmond papers "make frantic appeals to the Confederate people not to listen to any terms of com-



promise short of Confederate independence. . . . In another "Extra" on February 4, 1865, this paper stated: "The President and Secretary of State arrived back this morning from Fortress Monroe. . . . The conference occupied four hours and resulted in no change of the attitude either of the government or of the rebels. . . . Commenting on the fruitless meeting The Star observed: "The President. . . has afforded to the country the best evidence of his disposition to do all that may be done consistent with the national honor to put a stop to the further effusion of blood. . . . The rebels, or their leaders at least, are not yet prepared to accept the only terms we can offer, i.e., to lay down their arms and return to the Union. It is well that the mask has been thus effectually stripped from the face of these assumed peace commissioners. All parties here will now recognize that there is to be no peace short of fighting the thing squarely through. While Lee's army remains intact at Richmond there can be no peace worth having. So, push on the

column! Forward Peace Commissioners Grant and Sherman." The Star of Feb. 5, 1915, revealed, "No details have been made known (about the conference) nor is it probable that they will transpire, the President and Secretary Seward being the only parties present on our side, and the conference being entirely informal, more in the character of a general conversation. . . . than a grave diplomatic discussion."

50 Years Ago

Work on the Arlington Cemetery Amphitheater was about to start, The Star of Feb. 5, 1915, revealed, Congress had appropriated \$250,000 for the project and limited its cost to \$750,000. It was first planned to include a crypt for interment of distinguished public figures, such as done in Westminster Abbey, but this idea was abandoned.

The British Cunard liner Lusitania safely crossed the Atlantic, from New York to Liverpool, on Feb. 6, 1915. The Star reported the U. S. flag had been flown in place of the Union Jack to make German U-boats and warships think the liner was a neutral vessel.

Names in lights at local theaters 50 years ago: Mary Pickford in "Mistress Nell," at the Garden; Annette Kellermann, "The Perfect Woman," at the National; Evelyn Nesbit in "Sensational and Catchy Songs," at Keith's; William Hodge in "The Road to Happiness," at the Belasco.

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THE FEDERAL SPOTLIGHT

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Billion Reports Required Annually By Agencies Shock House Group

By JOSEPH YOUNG
Star Staff Writer

A sharply critical House group declares that government agencies require one billion reports each year or five for every person in the United States.

"The paperwork situation in federal agencies is far worse than it was 10 years ago when the second Hoover Commission urged that the agencies cut down on unnecessary and excessive paperwork," said Rep. Arnold Olsen, D-Mont., chairman of the House Civil Service subcommittee investigating government reports and paperwork.

"It is obvious that a major overhaul of the entire federal reporting system is indicated," he declared. "What's good in the system should be retained and improved. What's useless or excessive should go—and fast."

Olsen referred to President Johnson's action last week in ordering the General Services Administration to cut down on purchases of file cabinets.

The Montanan commented: "We all support the President's efforts to cut down on waste and inefficiency in federal agencies, but to cut down on the number of file cabinets is to lock the barn door after the horse has been stolen."

Olsen said his subcommittee was "genuinely shocked" when it learned about the paperwork requirements inflicted on business, industry and the public by federal agencies.

Internal Revenue Service accounts for one-half of all federal reports. Other major federal paperwork agencies cited by the House group are

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MORATORIUM DECLARED

Johnson Acts to Halt Buying of File Cases

President Johnson has declared a moratorium on buying new file cases for government offices in an effort to trim the \$60 million federal agencies have been spending annually for new office furniture and equipment.

In addition, the President has ordered efforts to reduce new purchases of typewriters and desks by repairing old ones.

To keep from buying new file cases, Johnson told the agencies to accelerate disposal of old records, either by destruction or by transfer to federal records centers.

He outlined the measures designed to save at least \$5 million a year in a letter to Lawson B. Knott Jr., acting administrator of the General Services Administration. The White House made the letter public last night.

He told Knott that GSA may "fill requirements for file cases which cannot be met by records disposal under an austere standard of issue from inventories of excess file cases and current warehouse stocks."

Speaking of office furniture, typewriters and file cabinets generally, the President said "it is particularly important to obtain as much equipment as possible through timely declarations of excess property for prompt redistribution."

While the savings to be achieved in this way "may appear modest in relation to the overall cost of the government," the President said, "it represents the kind of managerial prudence which can save us much larger sums if applied to all aspects of government operations."

**"There's No Room To File This White House
Order Prohibiting Filing Cabinet Purchases . . ."**

